

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

With regard to the objections to the drawings, Claim 34 has been cancelled and the limitation relating to the radial direction movement has been deleted from independent Claim 18. It is therefore submitted that the objections to the drawings have been obviated.

The specification has been revised to eliminate references to the claims by amending paragraph [0001] and deleting paragraph [0004].

The claims have been amended to eliminate the objections noted by the Examiner and to overcome the rejections under paragraphs 1 and 2 of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

With regard to the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Yokoyama et al, Claim 18 has been amended to define the hydrodynamic component as a hydrodynamic component as a hydrodynamic clutch wherein such clutch is free of a guide wheel. It is submitted that the claims now patentably define over Yokoyama et al.

The structure of the apparatus described in Yokoyama et al is a torque converter, which is comprised of an impeller, a turbine and a reactor or stator member 20 as set forth in column 3, lines 37-41, for example. The hydrodynamic element of the present invention, on the other hand, is now limited to a hydrodynamic clutch. The difference between a hydrodynamic torque converter, which is able to convert driving speed and torque, and a hydrodynamic clutch is that the hydrodynamic clutch consists essentially of only two elements instead of three, namely, only the impeller and the turbine. What is missing from a hydrodynamic clutch and which is present in a torque converter is a guide element such that the hydrodynamic clutch is not able to convert torque but only converts the driving speed. This distinction has been structurally clarified by specifically calling for the hydrodynamic clutch being free of a guide wheel as set forth in paragraph [0021] of the present specification. Thus, the claimed clutch does not include the reactor member 20 as in Yokoyama et al.

An essential difference between Yokoyama et al and the present invention as claimed is the operation of the means to influence the transmission ratio of the hydrodynamic coupling according to the present invention in comparison to moving the reactor member 20 of Yokoyama et al. As is described in the bridging paragraph of column 4 to column 5 of Yokoyama et al, the reactor member 20 is moved to and maintained in the retracted position during operation in the coupling range, that is, when the positive, rigid connection is

established between the input shaft 12 and output shaft 14. The reactor member thereby closes the entrance end 64 of the fluid flow path in the impeller member 16 (column 4, lines 55-66) and hydrodynamic torque transfer by the fluid circulation in the working chamber is interrupted. The slip between the input and output shaft is essentially zero.

In the present invention, to the contrary, the torque transfer is lowered in the range of very high clutch slip (see the latter part of paragraph [0002] in the introduction). Therefore, the means to influence the transmission ratio acts on the working circulation in the range of a high slip between the primary and secondary impeller. Lowering the slip during the starting operation, the means are brought to an inactive position, that is, a position of less or no influence onto the flow of circulation (see the end of paragraph [0006]). Furthermore, in the range of a very low slip, the mechanical bridging clutch is actuated to establish a mechanical connection between the primary and secondary impellers, that is, when the means to influence the transmission ratio is in the inactive position.

In addition, Yokoyama et al does not explicitly disclose that the position of the pressure medium actuated integrated component is a function of the differential pressure between the pressure medium diverted from the inlet channel or the working fluid guide channel or chamber and the pressure in the interior of the housing in the area of the clutch actuation system as called for at the end of Claim 18.

In view of the above, it is submitted the application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes that further issues remain, it is requested that he telephone the undersigned at 260-460-1692.

Application Serial No. 10/595,647
Amendment dated July 2, 2009
Response to Office Action dated March 5, 2009

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels.

Respectfully submitted,

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